



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier Bay National Park
and Preserve

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National Park Service News Release

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Whale Waters Update for Glacier Bay Effective May 7, 2014

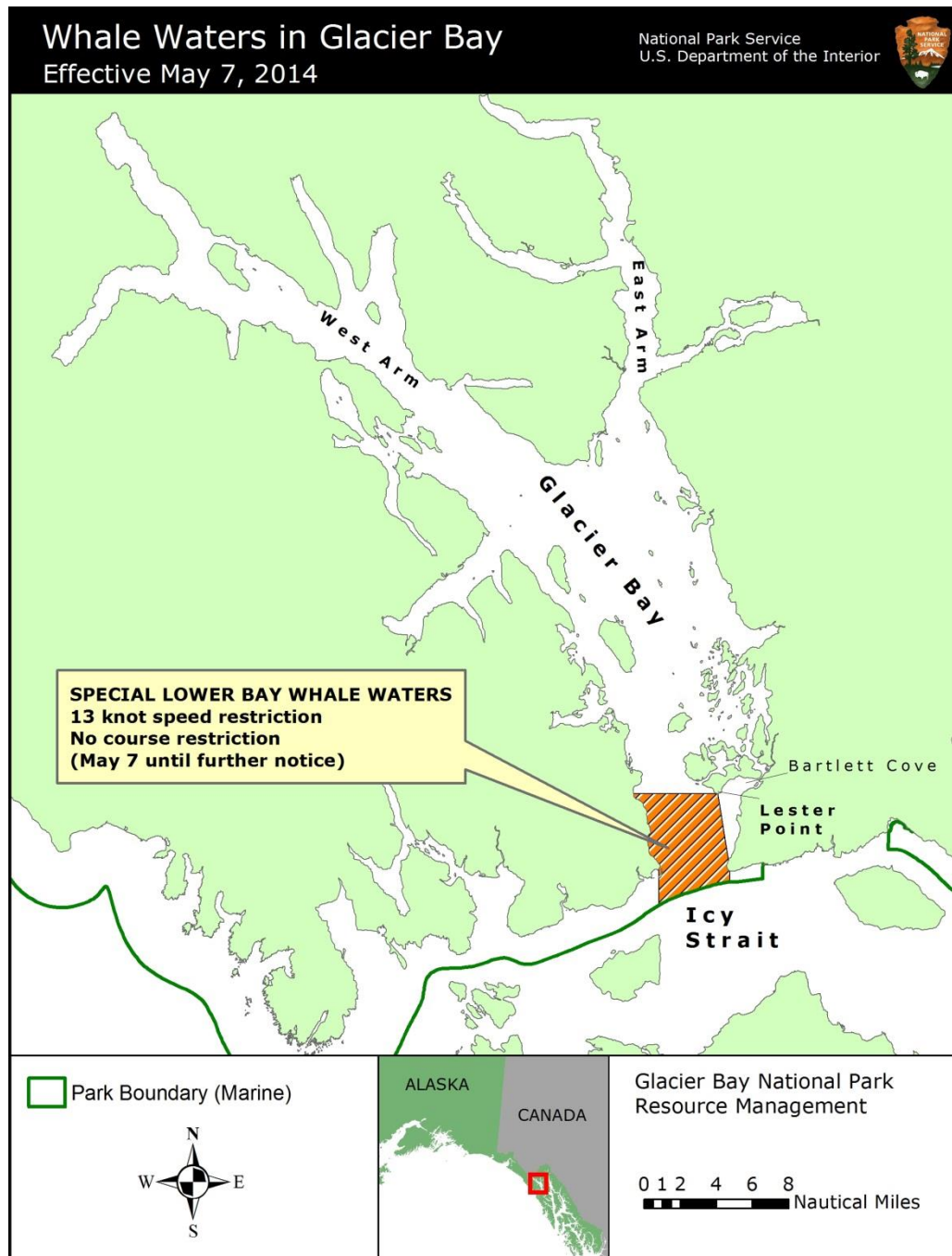
BARTLETT COVE, ALASKA – Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Acting Superintendent Lisa Etherington announced today that a vessel speed limit of 13 knots through the water will be implemented in lower Glacier Bay and in Park waters at the mouth of Glacier Bay to protect numerous humpback whales that have been sighted in this area. During the past week, at least 21 different humpback whales have been observed feeding in this area, including a mother/calf pair. A course restriction is not being implemented because the whales have been observed feeding mid-channel. This speed restriction will apply to all vessels from 5 AM Wednesday May 7 until further notice.

As shown on the attached map, the designated special lower Glacier Bay whale waters include the waters extending from the mouth of Glacier Bay to a line drawn from Lester Point due west to Ripple Cove. The eastern boundary runs from Lester Point to Point Gustavus and then due south to the Park boundary in Icy Strait. Bartlett Cove is not included. The western boundary is the shoreline from Ripple Cove south to Point Carolus and then due south to the Park boundary in Icy Strait.

Boaters should proceed cautiously in all areas where whales may be present because whales may surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale. Vessels are prohibited from operating within ¼ nautical mile of a humpback whale in Park waters, including those Park waters outside Glacier Bay proper. In addition, vessel operators positioned within ½ nautical mile of a humpback whale are prohibited from altering their course or speed in a manner that results in decreasing the distance between the whale and the vessel. Speed and course restrictions in whale waters are intended to reduce the disruption of feeding humpback whales and to lower the risk of whale/vessel collisions, as authorized by Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart N, 13.1174.

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Boaters are advised to verify whale waters designations prior to entering Glacier Bay by telephoning (907) 697-2627 or by contacting KWM20 Bartlett Cove on marine VHF radio.



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